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A MAGAZINE OF DEFINITE PROGRESS AND VIRILE OPTIMISM IN RELIGION

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The Unitarian Advance

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OUR SOCIAL PLATFORM

THE General Conference of Unitarian and other Christian churches stands and believes that the individual churches must stand and work:

For equal rights and complete justice for all men of all races, in all stations of life.

For the right of all men to self-maintenance, a right ever to be wisely safeguarded against encroachments of every kind.

For the right of the workers to some protection against the hardships resulting from swift industrial changes.

For the principles of conciliation and arbitration in industrial dissensions and the full consideration of the rights of the public at times of disagreement or industrial warfare.

For the protection of the workers from dangerous machinery, occupational disease, and mining disasters.

For the abolition of child labor and the protection of children from exploitation in industry and from work that is degrading, dwarfing and morally unwholesome.

For such regulation of the conditions of toil and hours of labor for women as shall safeguard the physical and moral health of the community.

For the suppression of the "sweating system."

For the gradual and reasonable reduction of the hours of labor to the lowest practicable point, and for that degree of leisure for all which is a condition of the highest human life.

For the release from employment one day in seven and a wage based not on a seven-day week but on a six-day week.

For a living wage as a minimum in every industry, and for the highest wage that each industry can afford.

For the most equitable division of the products of industry that can ultimately be devised.

For suitable provision for the old age of workers and for those incapacitated by injury in industry.

For the control of the natural resources of the earth in the interests of all the people.

For the gaining of wealth according to the highest ethical standards and the holding of wealth as a social trust.

For the discouragement of the immoderate desire for wealth; and the exaltation of man as the end and standard of industrial activity.

For the abolition of poverty.

For proper housing; for the proper care of dependents and criminals; for pure food and drugs; for wholesome recreation; and for international peace.

For such safeguarding and extension of the institutions of democratic government as will permit and insure the maintenance of the rights of all against encroachments from the special interests of the few.

Unanimously adopted at the General Conference of Unitarian churches at Washington, 1911.

The Unitarian Advance

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VOLUME III (NEW SERIES) SEPTEMBER, 1912 NUMBER 1

AT the annual meeting of the Unitarian Western Conference held in May, a resolution was presented by the business committee proposing the appointment of a committee to consider the feasibility of merging *"The Western Conference Unitarian"* with THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE. This resolution was unanimously adopted, and a committee empowered to confer with the editors of THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE and to consummate any *merger* arrangement that might be agreed upon. This action was wholly unanticipated by the editors of THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE but was cordially welcomed: and a congenial basis of union was promptly agreed upon which will be consummated in our next issue.

UNDER the new arrangements THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE adds to its editorial board five new members from the Western Conference: REV. ERNEST C. SMITH, Secretary of the Western Conference and present editor-in-chief of the *Western Conference Unitarian;* Rev. GEORGE R. GEBAUER of Duluth, Minn., Rev. ALBERT R. VAIL of Urbana, Ill., Rev. EVERETT D. MARTIN of Des Moines, Ia.; and Mr. J. E. WILLIAMS of Streator, Ill. Mr. Smith will act as Assistant Editor, and will have charge of a four-page section devoted entirely to Western Conference news and interests, and an increased share of the contributed matter of our columns will be sought for from our friends in the West.

BY an interesting coincidence the change involved in this new adjustment falls in with another adjustment made necessary by the removal of the editor of THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE to San Antonio, Texas, the first of October. When the change of residence was first decided upon the editor assumed that it must involve his relinquishment of a very enjoyable service in connection with this publication, and so stated the matter to his associate editors. San Antonio is a long way from the centre of things Unitarian, and THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE has always emphasized its significance as a New York publication. But after due deliberation the editors unanimously insisted that the present editor continue as the head of its destinies, and that San Antonio and Chicago alike be annexed to New York as the composite capital of THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE. And we are going to try it out along these lines: our official imprint being from this time on: *"New York: Chicago: San Antonio."*

MAY we frankly call attention to two significant aspects of this enlarged "Headquarters"? In a vital sense it does not so much change as complete the ideal with which our enterprise was launched seven years ago. We have aspired to be the exponent of a genuinely *national* Unitarianism: peculiarly expressive of the needs and aspirations and ideals of those churches which lie beyond the New England home of American liberalism, and have added to the earlier heritage some elements of vigor and valor which naturally came with newer enterprise and younger zeal. It is not that West or South could do without the noble tradition and splendid support of the New England churches, or would in the least minimize the peculiar quality of leadership which belongs to them. Their continuing generosity and loyality have been the safeguard of our prosperity through nine decades of Unitarian development, and the years are long distant when the pre-eminence of their service shall be disregarded. But as emphatically do we believe that New England needs the West and South, in frank and free utterance of themselves in the experiences

and ideals which are in some ways peculiar to their differing conditions of development. It has seemed a part of the mission of THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE to give fuller opportunity for this voice to be heard.

FOR the fulfillment of this ideal, *"New York, Chicago, San Antonio"* would seem a very happy combination. It links together important centres of three Department Conferences:—the Middle States and Canada, the Western, and the Southern Conferences. Each has its peculiar local color; all share in a common destiny of newly developing strength. Our board of editors is well distributed to gather in the interests of all sections: two are at home in Boston; two in New York and vicinity, one in the largest city in Canada, five in various parts of the Middle West and one in the South. And every man is vitally enlisted and fixed as a *nerve centre* of denominational interest in the section which he represents. The present editorial board is *genuinely* composite; each man upon it has a specific value in its "editorial personality."

MAY we hint at the significance of another aspect of the change? Hereafter the "Editorial Headquarters" of THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE will not be at a centre of "officialdom" but in a camp on the firing line of the advance. San Antonio is specifically a missionary enterprise, at present; its minister is to be a missionary worker. This involves limitations and also opportunities in his relationship to a national denomination publication. Without the large and constant co-operation of his associate editors the position would be impossible. But with that co-operation, may there not be some marked advantage that the voice of THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE which claims to be a voice of aggressive missionary enterprise and virile optimism shall come somewhat directly from fields where our gospel is proving itself on new soil and meeting the challenge of the brisk and eager zests of unhackneyed adventure? At any rate we propose to try it that way.

WE greatly regret in this connection to lose from our board a comrade whose contributions to our success in the past have been most vital. Rev. Charles W. Casson has resigned his pastorate in Dorchester to assume the editorship of the leading daily newspaper in Ottawa, Canada,—*The Ottawa Citizen*. As projector of "The Paragraph Pulpit" which has proved so useful a factor in our missionary work, and as an efficient coadjutor with Mr. Lawrance in the conduct of *The Beacon*, our denominational Sunday School periodical, Mr. Casson has rendered marked service to our cause in varied fields, and we are sorry that he cannot share with us any longer the comradeship of this enterprise which has so much about it congenial to his spirit and gifts. We are glad to say that this does not mean that his pen will not contribute to our pages as frequently as possible in the future.

BY the death of General Wiliam Booth the Christian world has lost one of its preeminently great men,—a master-genius in the workmanship of God. The theology of the Salvation Army is not our theology, and many of its methods could never be used by our churches with genuineness or efficiency. But because with Gen. Booth the work was genuine it was nobly efficient; and at the heart of it all was a daring faith in the practical side of Christian character-building which was peculiarly congenial to those of the liberal faith. Gen. Booth's work will always be reckoned as one of the uniquely constructive developments of nineteenth century Christianity; and all the great church organizations of the world, which at first looked upon his enterprise with much disdain, must bow with a certain humility of spirit before the achievements of his superb ideal.

THE "International Bible Students' Association," whose chief significance lies in the fact that its president is that past-master of self-advertising, "Pastor Russell," has recently advertised itself uniquely by passing resolutions abolishing "Hell Fire and Brimstone." More accurately let us say that at its

summer convention recently held in Washington, it has "resolved" that it unanimously "repudiates as thoroughly unscriptural" the teaching of a place, state or condition of a literal "lake of fire and brimstone" for the torment of the wicked; that the majority of Protestant clergymen have privately repudiated the theory, but hesitate to let their congregations know how sensible they are; and so the "I. B. S. A." appeals to "every minister in the United States to publish in his local paper, over his own signature," whether he believes the horrid doctrine or not, and every editor of a newspaper in the country to invite the ministers of his constituency to avail themselves of his columns for their statements." "In this one act" shall they "serve their readers better than in any other way." And this is 1912!

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OF course this specific issue of "liberalism" does not particularly interest the readers of THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE, save as an archaic curiosity. The question as to whether the "tortures of the damned" are physical or spiritual is not of much moment. They would be as eternally cruel and irrational in the one form as the other. We are of the conviction that neither view is "scriptural." But suppose it were scriptural: suppose a certain verse in a certain epistle or prophecy or psalm of ancient scripture set it down in final and unmistakable language that the Eternal God had somewhere fixed a Hell of eternal horror for the punishment of sinners—what would International Bible Students' Associations say then? Would the teaching be any less barbaric, inhuman, or of a sort to drive the world to infidelity? Would a reasonable, twentieth century sort of human soul be willing to believe in that sort of a God, as an eternally just God, if only texts enough could be found in scripture to substantiate the dogma? Of course there is the real test of progressiveness in religion. In the twentieth century the issues of liberalism are no longer as to what faiths are "scriptural," but as to the nature of "authority in religion" itself: and it is more significantly "behind the times" (i. e. illogical and irrational) to base religious faiths on the postulates of "an infallible scripture," than to believe in "fire and brimstone" because one does not know the difference between prose and poetry in ancient literature.

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THE recent revelatons of systematic graft, "punctuated by murder," in the New York police service are woefully appalling; yet they simply bring to burning-glass focus a scorching realization of precisely what ought to be expected with things as they are. Politics, as practically taken for granted by the good citizens of this nation for the last score of years, inevitably runs to this sort of thing. There are some very wicked men tangled up with the very important business of protecting the public from the crimes and vices of the wicked; and there are some very human men placed under circumstances where most insidious and overstraining temptation continually besets them. All this is so because a very large number of very well-meaning and intelligent and high-idealed men entrusted with civic responsibilities choose to deal with politics as though it were a side issue with religion and morality,—when it is not a personal issue to be used as a method of helping their own business or personal advantage along. The average voter is simply an intermittent amateur at a business which the regular politician makes a steady profession. The average voter pays all the bills, is the final victim of the professional politician's clever "statescraft,"—but thinks that what he gets out of what he votes for is compensation enough to make the thing worth while.

—o—

JUST now there are signs of a popular revolt at the old order of things in politics. The average voter is catching vision of better things, and what is more important, gathering ideas as to how better things can be brought about. The essential motive behind all this present restlessness known as "Progressiveism" in various forms throughout the country, is an eager desire to get public service out of the hands of the professional politicians; to give the average voter more direct voice in the conduct of affairs that

affect the public weal. The old party machine must go, and the party boss must go, and the partnership between politics and that sort of business which is conveniently designated as "Big" must be broken up. For in final fact the ethical differences between what has been happening in New York under the "Police System" and what happens in Washington every time a new tariff-bill is drawn up, are not so great as some people imagine. The common people are now becoming interested in the question as to how this sort of thing,—from police-graft to tariff-graft, from System of Protection of Vice in a great city, to System of Protection of Crookedness in monopolistic business trusts in a whole nation,—shall be made impossible. It is an important question; and whatever is "disturbing" about the present political situation lies in the clash between politics as its professionals would play it and the determination of voters to work out public service in an entirely different way.

THE convention of the new "Third Party" in Chicago was a most impressive event, viewed from any man's point of view. Even newspapers representing most hostile standpoints reported its proceedings as having a singularly religious tone and atmosphere. The people who gathered for its deliberations were certainly dead in earnest; and a large proportion of them were kindled with exalting ideals. There is much in favor of their enterprise. Undoubtedly the present alignment of political parties in this country is neither logical nor wholesome. It is unfortunate that one of the great parties is practcally a sectional institution, having no standing or influence in a significant portion of the Union. It is unfortunate that the other party, in nearly all of our great cities, at any rate, where the foreign vote is large, is rightly or wrongly identified in men's minds too closely with low and sordid elements of political obliquity. Most of all is it unfortunate that men's action in local state and municipal issues is too often so affected by the prejudices and passions of national partisanships that the intelligent uniting of all good elements against all vicious elements is almost impossible, so that the craftsman of wickedness, (either police-grafter or trust-grafter) plays an easy game by pitting party prejudice against party prejudice, to the obscuring of vital public concerns. Every intelligent observer can easily see how a great deal of fictitiousness inheres in the old party divisions, and how a much healthier condition of things might be brought about by an entirely new demarkation, by which all the people having high ideals, honest purposes, and intelligent convictions as to public welfare could be brought together in the same party,—and insist that the game of politics as they play it be always honorable, upright and clean!

IS the launching of the new "Progressive Party" going to bring this ideal state of things about? Some progressive and sensible people have great hopes about it. Others are not so sure. Its dominating ideal is undoubtedly a noble one, and the platform which it issues comes as near to being ideal as any party-platform recently formulated. Whether its method of campaign is to prove the salvation of the nation's politics is not so easily to be agreed upon. For one thing, nobody can prevent the professional politicians otherwise out of a job from flocking to the standard of any new party showing signs of success,—and proving "very useful" to its practical prosperity. Moreover it must be admitted that amongst those organizing the "holy crusade" at Chicago, there is not quite an equal sharing of confidence in the Vehement Leader,—one can hardly say, whom they chose to lead, but rather who permitted them to follow! —Theodore Roosevelt was three years Governor of New York and seven years President of the United States. During those particular years his hostility to politics of the older sort was not vehement, his relation with conspicuous party bosses was not one of estrangement, and a large proportion of the high ideals of "progressiveism" which now characterize his platform were quite out of evidence when he had a hand in formulating the party platforms on which his earlier candida-

tures were waged; nor were they obvious in President's messages or actual achievements of statescraft in the days when his vehement personality dominated administrations that actually were administrative.

IN these regards, one can hardly escape the contrasts presented in the career of one of Mr. Roosevelt's competitors, for instance,—who, stepping out of the "impractical walks of academic life" to the Governorship of a State in which politics had been as machine-cursed as in any State in the Union, found a very quiet and effectual way of putting the bosses out of commission, of divorcing statescraft from machine politics, and of writing into the legislation of his State the sort of laws that were distinctly "progressive" according to all standards of contemporary politics,—and opposed by the machine men of both the entrenched parties; a sort of legislation which was signally non-partisan, but very, very practical. The old party alignments are surely not going to count for much in the present campaign; for on the whole, the matter of "personal equation" is destined to be the dominant factor,—as it ought to be. And in a clear-cut issue of personal "values" the American people rarely go wrong.

THE New York Headquarters opens this month under changed auspices. Hereafter it will be in the joint control of the Middle States Conference and the New York League, and the work of the Women's Alliance will be a larger factor in its administration. Miss Florence Bischoff, whose winsome personality has for eight years been so efficiently identified with the Headquarters as Clerk, has resigned that position, to the regret of us all; but fortunately the services of Miss Wentz, a recent graduate of the Tuckerman School have been secured in her stead. Hereafter the hour of opening will be nine o'clock instead of nine-thirty.

Rev. Florence Buck, of Alameda, Cal., has been appointed as a field secretary in the Department of Religious Education, under the new adjustment between the Unitarian Sunday School Society and the A. U. A.

A SUNRISE IS NOT A CONFLAGRATION.

THERE are ten people who can discover an imaginary danger lurking in some theory of radicalism, for every one who can appreciate the danger which lurks in established wrong. And there are ten who will condemn, unheard, the imaginary danger for every one who will undertake to understand why it is a danger. If we could all retain our scientific and rational processes of reasoning in the pinch, we would put the emphasis where it really belongs. Just now we are hearing a great deal about certain dangerous tendencies in American political thought. Editors and priests seem trying to excel each other in their vociferous denunciation of these tendencies. In their passionate protests these editors and priests waste very little time in trying to understand why these powerful tendencies have manifested themselves. There is a great deal of silly nonsense talked about the moral and political bankruptcy of American citizenship. This is the hoot of owls who see only in the night.

American citizenship on the whole is more moral, more virile, more aspiring in spirit than ever before in its history. Some of its cries and shouts may be crude, passionate, or even inarticulate, but there is absolute certainty of the tendency of it all. We are outgrowing a number of ancient abuses and injustices, and around us are the signs of the coming of a nobler age. To those who care more for the progress of real democracy and true liberty than for the special privileges, these are days of mighty encouragement. When the tide passes there will be many old evils high and dry on the beach. The owners of these crafts, even though they be pirates and freebooters, will have their mourners. But for all who love justice and honor and right the beacon lights are burning bright with hope along the border of the world. What those who batten on social injustice think is a vast conflagration is only the skylight of the rising sun. Get up, brethren. It is time to go forth with singing and gladness, and great confidence of soul. Hasten or the day will overtake you, for these are those "new

occasions" in the swift flight of time, which, as Lowell said, "make ancient good uncouth."—Editorial in *Universalist Leader,* June 29, 1912.

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THE MODERN IDEA OF GOD.

By W. Hanson Pulsford.

OUR own time has seen what is nothing less than a revolution in every department of human knowledge. No text book of our grandfathers is any longer of value save as a curiosity. Yet the professed theological standards of most of the churches date from the middle ages. Happily those who think are no longer bound by them. For such, the material heaven and hell, the infallible Bible, the supernatural Jesus, and the tissue of miracle which was supposed to attest his divinity, have half consciously passed away. Unfortunately clear thought has only too seldom taken their place. The modern idea of the universe is ours. We have not yet reached the inspiration of the larger and more vital conception of God which it opens to us.

The universe presents itself today to the educated man as a teeming complex of forces. Heat, gravitation, sunlight, electricity, the chemical changes which reveal themselves to the experimenter, are some of these forces. But we have risen to think of them as all merely different forms of one ultimate energy which, though we cannot grasp it, we are compelled to think. The summer warmth winning vapor from the sea, the condensing raindrop, the river boiling up in the turbine, the electric current lighting our cities and driving our machinery, are only different expressions of the ultimate energy which moves and works in everything we know.

What is its nature? The answer lies in that wonder of wonders, the story of its ceaseless unfolding. We can now, thanks to modern knowledge, watch the process. We know it first as the cloud of star mist cooling and drawing together to form this planet. We see it coming gradually to express some of its latent possibilities in the forms of earths and gases, in the complex miracles of the gleaming gold and the diamond. But it cannot stay there. The power which in the diamond ordered the wonder of crystalline structure must needs voice itself in the higher forms we call vital. Age after age we watch it unfold in the untold centuries of plants and grasses and flowers telling a little more fully the nature which lay latent in the simpler star dust. At last even in the plant it comes almost to feel and think. The hidden forces of life have not far to travel now till we find them blossoming into the living creatures that people earth and air and sea and rising at last through the savage to the realm of the ideal and the conscious knowledge of the life journey we have traced.

There are no breaks. Our life story is one. It is all the growth by infinitely gradual changes of the more and more complex expression of the undying energy of which we know and all that we are is a manifestation.

God is but the name which we give to that which in us blossoms into soul. As he is in himeslf he is unknowable to our limited thought. Yet in all that we know we are coming to know more fully what God is. The higher life rises in us, the more truly do we think, live, understand, express God who is the life of all that is and of whom in a nearer sense than the theologian dreamed of we are the children.

The life towards which we are growing is just that ever finer quality of being towards which we move as we let the limitless tide of the universe rise in us as our life. We may become its conscious channels. Latent in each one of us as the heritage which we may claim as our own are the untold possibilities of the universal life before which our finest dreams inevitably grow poor and dim. God is revealing himself in all the upward trend of our humanity and we *live* only as we let that which is the inner power of our very being have free outlet as our conscious inspiration and endeavor toward that nobler future of which all the past is but a prophecy.

———o———

The annual meeting of the Middle States Conference will be held in Toronto in November.

The New Unitarianism

By The Editor.

Of course the essential substance of the Unitarian gospel is not new at all, and can never wisely be spoken of as such. For it reaches far back to the days when amongst the primitive tribes of Israel, confused with their diverse deities and shredded cults and superstitions the great Prophets stood forth to proclaim that "the Eternal God is one God," and that the whole requirement of his service is to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk reverently in God's close companionship. Then it was that the real gospel of Unitarianism began. And when the Man of Nazareth came, to sum up law and gospel in golden rule and two-fold service of love,—Godward and manward, —(two loves, and the two are one!)—he but transfigured the old prophetic message to a finer presence of sympathy and consecration: in its superb simplicity there was the essential substance of the gospel which we preach today.

Afterward the theologians confused and obscured this primal simplicity: elaborated dogmas and multiplied complexities, that when the Unitarian fathers of the beginning of the nineteenth century made protest against the barbarisms of dominant Calvinism, the gospel which they preached was not an innovation or a latter day revelation, but the primal simplicity, the essential faith of the ages, redeemed from its obscurations: the Eternal God is one God; the whole requirement of religious service is to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk reverently in God's close companionship,—to prove efficient love of God through efficient love of fellow man. Here is the essential substance of religion as we teach it,—not new but old,—the faith of the early Unitarian fathers, the faith of Jesus of Nazareth, the faith of the ancient prophets; the abiding sum and substance of the gospel for which every Unitarian church is built, and shall be built so long as our name shall abide at all.

Why then speak of a *new* Unitarianism? Surely not in the spirit of belligerent differentiation from the faiths we have inherited from those who have borne our name before us, or with arrogant claim of revolutionary progress which shall bring wrangling division in our ranks. Surely no such folly. And yet every vital gospel, because it is a living reality, must be a growing reality, and so in some regards a changing reality. Changing times must bring changing horizons; changing conditions must demand changing applications and interpretations; and no one can escape the conviction today that for religion as for everything else there are conditions of life and thought which challenge somewhat of new vision and interpretation and accentuation, in the presentation of every essential faith of the past that has had any eager significance. And in our own body there is emerging a new spirit of prophecy and interpretation, though with the essential burden of the initial prophecy is still held intact, which invites our kindling interest and attention.

I.

In the first place, the New Unitarianism is no longer a gospel of theological controversy and dogmatic criticism. It was inevitable at the start that Unitarianism should be presented resolutely in controversial terms. It had a message of protest to utter. Our fathers had a fight to wage for truth and progress, against the errors and misconceptions of those opposed to them; and when the keen edge of stalwart negations must be used to define sharply the nobler issues of verity for which they battled, they wielded well the weapons of their controversy as the time demanded. We have no shame for the part our fathers played in truth's lusty warfare; but we realize that the time for that warfare has passed. We have other things to do.

Of course, from the very first, the Unitarian fathers insisted that their new enterprise did not stand for the mere substitution of one sort of theology for another sort; that their chief business was not to convert the world from the errors of trinitarianism to the verities of Unitarianism. That wasn't their issue. They insisted rather that Unitarianism was a new method of approaching truth, not a new manner of formulating it. It stood

for the open mind toward all possible manifestations of truth; for the individual soul's inherent responsibility of truth-seeking, wherever each soul should find its way of truth's forthlooking; for the courage of progress in truth-seeking more than for explicitness of theological accuracy in truth-phrasing. That was primal in the Unitarian movement, from the very start.

But the New Unitarianism goes farther than that. It insists that truth-seeking, even in the boldest fidelity of free inquiry, is not the chief function of the Church of God: that the concerns of religion are ethical more than they are theological; and that the essential bond of union of a true church is not a common substance of doctrine to be agreed upon, but a common purpose of righteousness to be strenuously shared:—not a creed of things believed in, but a covenant of right endeavor for things to be accomplished. It insists that we can spare little time in quarreling with the churches not agreeing with us theologically, if-so-be we can find a comprehensive sense of vital fellowship with all the souls of men, of whatever church, or of no church, who are helping things to happen for the Kingdom of God's righteousness and love.

All the churches today are becoming touched by this spirit. They are not rewriting their creeds; they are simply forgetting them in their absorption in other religious interests. They are becoming concerned about things to be done, more than about things to be believed. The religion of the will and not of the intellect,—(shall I dare say it?—not even of the "heart," in the old sentimental sense of the word,)—is becoming the dominant religion everywhere. In some places, I regret to notice, the Unitarian churches lag behind the others in their reluctance to give over the old warfare concerning dogmas. The New Unitarianism is through with that worry. It is eager to interpret religion vitally and ethically and socially, rather than intellectually and "rationally," in the cold sense of that word. It stands not for a criticism but for an achievement; not for negation of old-time errors, but for the positive zest of a tremendously eager passion of new-time advance.

Yet do not mistake: this does not in the least involve indifference to the vital integrities of truth in thought and utterance. If the New Unitarianism is not so eager as the old to refute the theological errors of the other churches it is not a whit the less scrupulous in its own exactions of intellectual honesty. Indeed, a growing sense of the ethics of veracity in religious utterance is a mark of the new generation:—a keener appetite for *reality* in the things of faith; a more wholesome impatience at spent traditions and ungenuine symbolisms brought over from mistaken theories of God's ways of revelation. For an honest and consistent conservative the New Unitarianism has no disrespect. The range of the liberal church is by its own conditions wide enough to comprehend many shades of belief. But with that unethical type of "liberalism" which plays fast and loose with the small coin of theological terminology for expediency's sake: which lacks the courage of its own progressive thought: which uses disguises for its advanced positions, and conspires with the thoughtless to make clear thinking on religion's great issues not easy and inevitable,—with such indeed the New Unitarianism has no patience whatsoever. Unfortunately our Unitarian cause has in some places suffered from such frailties and there is a custom of the past to be thoroughly outgrown.

Nor does this scrupulosity involve, as Dr. Jacks seems to suggest in his article published elsewhere, any fettering of the soul's range of spiritual imagination or bereavement of its instinct for poetry. That is not the issue. The truly prophetic soul will always find its splendid privilege of imagination virgin and unstinted wherever there is faith at all; and the true instinct of poetry glories in the fresh challenges of new insights and fields of discovery. Because of its virility the New Unitarianism demands that not in the hackneyed phrases of a former and less wide-horizoned age must the prophet of religion find the limit of his thought's vocabularity; and that on the other hand, with a fresh and vigorful honesty of

speech shall he testify to his faith in simple, straight and genuine utterance, and shall disentangle his custom of religion from symbolisms and institutions that only by indirection and obscuring vagueness become the medium of his truth-bearing. The nobler imagination of faith, the purer poetry, the more valid symbolisms of true religion are inevitably born, and find their opportunity, out of the genuine spontaneousness of a living experience. The habit of spent and "reinterpreted" symbols and phrases but weakens for the soul alike its ethics and its passion of progress. Perhaps the liberal church of today will best bear its part in the theological liberalization of the world not by busily striving to convert the other churches to its peculiar doctrines, but by standing steadfastly true in its own position of utter honesty in the things of the intellect,—of giving to the world an example of *genuineness* in practice and precept as a method of religion.

II.

As I come to my second point I know that somebody will bring accusation of inconsistency; because to introduce our "secondly" we must turn back to a specific issue of theology, after seeming to throw theology overboard in what has gone before. Let the issue vindicate our logic.

From the very first, people have generally made a mistake as to the centre of significance of the Unitarian gospel in its theological bearing. They have fancied that the heart-centre of the Unitarian protest against the old Calvinism lay in its new teaching about the nature of God: not three but one,—and not stinted to the single incarnation of Israel's Christ. This is a mistake. The central point in the early Unitarian protest was not a new conception of the nature of God, but a new conception of the nature of man. All the rest was derivitive of and subsequent to that. The essential protest was against the doctrine of a fallen humanity, of a lost and ruined human nature, of a perverted human reason and conscience, of a race under doom of Eternal wrath. The Unitarian gospel stands first of all, uncompromisingly, indomitably, triumphantly for faith in the divine fact of the human soul; unescapably divine; sharing the nature of the God who made it to the last possibilities of God's eternity. This does not mean a perfect humanity, of course. The imperfection and the failing, the sin and the weakness are all too evident on every hand; and the eternal God has concern in the eternal difference between the evil and the righteous in the minutest experiences of the human soul.

But human nature, from the quality of its humanity, shares with God of the divine; its essence is heaven-seeking, its destiny is God-completing, its reason for being is celestial. And all humanity, no matter how imperfect here or there, however low-developed, however sin-hampered and thwarted and perplexed, is bound together unconquerably in the great brotherhood of its kinship of divinity; it is of one household, one heredity of divine destiny.

Here is the focal point of the whole Unitarian theology; and changed views regarding the nature of God, or Revelation, or Heaven and Hell are simply corollary to this central faith which Channing and Parker and Martineau have so splendidly interpreted.

But the New Untarian goes farther than this. It is not content that the liberal church should find its chief function the promulgation of a more genial and sweetly reasonable conception of the nature of the human soul. It is not content with preaching simply a fine philosophy of the divinity of humanity and the superb ideal of the brotherhood of man. The New Unitarianism is insistent *on the doing of things* which shall help achieve in vital attainment this ideal of its theology; that more of mankind attain more of its divinity; that the brotherhood of man become more exultantly an achieved realization of human society.

For we have to acknowledge that our superb ideal of human brotherhood is very far from being an exultant achievement under present conditions; and we have to admit that there is a vast deal of humanity which is woefully thwarted and hindered and dispossessed of its fair and full chance to attain unto its reasonable potentiality of self-development,

with things as they are. There are conditions prevailing which tend to keep souls out of their heredity of manhood's best; there are social conditions bitterly entrenched in "things as they are" which make humanity mean a very poor and stunted and degraded and hopeless estate of being for a large proportion of the human race. And the New Unitarianism is not chiefly concerned any longer in persuading the world to believe as a genial philosophy that nevertheless human nature is divine and mankind a brotherhood, but is more concerned to persuade men to do things that count to give to more of the children of men their supreme chance to realize their divine potentiality, to achieve brotherhood in the full attainment of their nature's nicest and highest nobility of being.

We are living in a time when all thoughtful men are having their attention turned as never before to the problems of social injustice and inequality. I do not believe that the condition of any class is worse today, or the morals of any class more obliquitous than in times past. But more of the world has become sensitive to injustice and wrong; many in an embittered discontent such as has never before prevailed, and many others in a heightened and refined awakening of social sympathy and ethical protest against evils which the past complaisantly endured.

And people in the churches are becoming peculiarly sensitive about these things. It is not confined to any one church or denomination; it is creeping into the life of all the churches. When a few years ago the great Methodist Church was gathered for its national convocation, the delegates present were not satisfied that that great humanitarian fellowship should put itself on record solely as regards theologies and faiths; but a statement must be made of what the Methodist Church believes, and what that Church holds ought to be done, about social conditions,—child labor, sweat-shops, hours of employment, relations between employers and workmen, and the like; and so a vigorous Confession of Social Faith went forth as the voice of that Church to the Twentieth Century. And so a little later at national assemblages of the Presbyterian body, and of the Congregational body, and Baptists and others, the delegates of the churches, synods, conferences or whatever, so gathered together in the name of their denominations deemed it a part of their business to formulate not Confessions of Faith as to dogmas or "spiritual ideals," but Statements of Conviction as to the issues of Social Justice; for these things, (they maintained), these churches stand and for these things it is the business of our churches to work.

And last year our Unitarian churches had their General Conference at Washington; and there they put themselves on record in a splendid platform of Social Purpose: insisting that it is a part of the business for which our churches are organized to have interest and concern, to have faith and high endeavor, in these matters, in the face of conditions that are hostile to the righteousness of God and the justice of humanity. And that, I believe was a great day for American Unitarianism.

Now there is this interesting thing to note. These different "Confessions of Faith" as to Social Justice which the different denominations have adopted have a marked general resemblance; many of their phrases are substantially identical, and the general content of them all is the same. And they all have something to say about poverty. One urges for the "amelioration of human poverty"; another for the "abatement of human poverty"; another for the "relief of human poverty," and so on. But the Unitarians at Washington used another phrase. They declared that "we stand for the *abolition* of human poverty." *Of course!* All the essential optimism, all the dynamic faith, all the superb passion of spiritual confidence which the whole Unitarian gospel involves, make such a statement our final logic of aspiration. For if we really mean what we say when we claim to believe in the essential divinity of human nature and the efficient brotherhood of man, *of course* we believe that such a negation of all that brotherhood and divine humanity involve as human poverty really is, must be but a temporary evil,—must be not of the inevitable nature of

things, but of the tranistory process of things: *the divine fact is something other!* And our business is not chiefly to proclaim what the divine fact ideally is, but to count for something in helping the divine fact to arrive,—here on this very earth in which we live!

For what is the great evil involved in human poverty? It is not that some men go hungry and poorly clad, while others feast and are clothed in fine raiment; it isn't that some men live in conditions of great physical privation and squalid woe, while others are surrounded ever with dainty luxury and grace of being; it is not that some men, yes, and women too, and little children, find the whole circumstance of life to be a dreary round of grinding, crowding, soul-wearing, nerve-racking, wasting toil, while others live their genial lives of gentle leisure and cultured idleness. These things are wrong: they are unjust: they ought not so to be:—but these are not the things which make up the great curse of poverty. The heart of the woe of poverty, which most concerns the church of God, is that thousands upon thousands of the human family are bereft of their soul's full chance of divine soulship; are so cramped and demeaned, and numbed and fettered and thwarted and stunted by the circumstances of their living that they can not find their manhood or their womanhood in its full spaciousness of divine opportunity. Heredity becomes tainted, moral ideals become maimed, spiritual insight is dulled, vital ambitions wrecked, and souls despoiled of soulship, because of the conditions which social inequality brings about. And it is a concern of religion,—pre-eminently that religion whose corner-stone is its faith in the divinity of human nature and the superb ideal of human brotherhood,—that these conditions be changed: humanity vindicate its universal aspiration of progress, and whatever makes for thwarted and demeaned humanity be done away with. The New Unitarianism is eagerly aroused to the sense of this mission. It refuses longer to be conplaisant in the assertion of a fine intellectual philosophy about human nature; it is resolute for achievement that shall help the ideal become real.

Now, of course, somebody has become frightened. This means rank socialism, somebody cries in alarm. This means the turning of our churches into noisy forums for the discussion of vexatious social problems,—yes, even the bringing of politics into the house of God; this means the breaking up of our congregations into hostile camps before divisive programs of hot-headed social reformers; this means the abandonment of the higher issues of spiritual aspiration to the lower concerns of industrial and material well-being. This man would have the ministers of our churches become flaming firebrands of social discontent, and our congregations degenerate into fretful coteries of fanatical disturbers of the Church's peace.

No, that is not at all what I mean; and what I have called the New Unitarianism does not involve that. True Unitarianism is as hostile to dogmatisms in things social as in things theological; it stands for the sanctities of individual responsibility in private judgment; it is insistent for the open mind, the method of rational enquiry, the process of a rationally evolutionary progress in thought and action in every field of human experience. The dogmatism of the intolerant fanatic is as uncongenial to us as the dogmatism of the tradition-bound conservative. We insist simply on the open mind and the responsibilities of individual reason and conscience in these things.

But we do insist on these, vehemently! We do insist that our liberal faith demands the liberal method of approach to the great issues of the hour. We demand that at any rate our people shall pay attention; they shall not evade the problems of the time; they shall not dull their ears with indifference, they shall not stay their hearts with the complaisance of social inertia. We would not fix for them a program; we would not impose upon them a social dogmatism, we would not hurry them to a cheap and fantastic fanaticism; but we give challenge to the best that their manhood and womanhood contains of reason and conscience and instinct of love and justice, that in an hour when issues of tremendous social significance are crowding upon the world, each

soul that has caught the vision of the great liberal gospel of the Unitarian church shall give good account of itself, generously, vitally, thoughtfully, with a resolute sanity of vision and consecration of spirit that shall at once help save society from the mischief of its demagogues and its selfish reactionaries, and give to the world some passion of wide-ranging prophetship,—strong, and calm, and vigorful, and nice in discriminations, progressive and comprehensive in thoroughgoing faith.

III.

We have seen that the heart centre of the early revolt of the Unitarian fathers from the dogmas of Calvinism was not a new way of thinking about God, but of human nature. Yet a new way of thinking about God was inevitably consequent to that changed view of humanity. Surely no small part of the gift of the early Unitarians to their generation was a more rational and joyous faith regarding God. The God of wrath was banished, the God of love enthroned; the God of despotic whim and immoral fiat gave place to the God of infinite reasonableness; and the church at last was given faith in a Deity whom it could not only reverence and worship and love, but whom it could *respect*. With the faith in the essential divinity of humanity came a faith in the essential humanity of God; and the Unitarians of today enter into a priceless heritage of ennobling faith through the prophecy of the fathers.

But the New Unitarianism goes farther than this. It has to do not only with a God who can be loved and reverenced,—and superbly respected; and whom therefore we can with genuine service worship and obey. There is something added to that in our faith of today. How shall it be expressed?

Our most primal thought of God as an object of worship and awe is that of the Creator-God: the Infinite Source of all being. We look about us, and on every hand are the wonder and beauty of his handiwork. The majesty of the mountains, the glory of the sky, the grace of far-extending fields, the eternal mystery of the ever-chanting sea, and the marvel of the stars:—what more than they can bring home to us the immensity of God's eternal range of energy! We count the constellations, we dimly compass the far-off twilight of misting star-clusters, we turn our telescope to peer between their crevices, and behold, creations outlying creations unfold before us in their tremendous distances:—and God made them all, and the regency of his eternal law gathers them all into the glory of his unified creation.

But there is a man in California who can make a better apple than God has made. I visited not long ago a man in Canada who produced a more beautiful rose than the God of nature has ever produced. There is a wizard of a man in New Jersey who has discovered more efficient ways of making electricity work than the God of nature ever seems to have employed. Consider the marvel of human civilization: how different the man now inhabiting this globe from the first primeval man whom the God of nature first placed upon it! Whence the difference?

Why, because amongst those first crude, undeveloped tribes of men which were nature's production of manhood, there was one who dreamed a dream and caught a vision, not of himself as he was, but other than he was,—as he might be, as he would like to be, as he felt he ought to be in nobler glory of manhood: and he struggled and he wrestled, and made sacrifices and endured martyrdom, that he might conquer the thing that he was and achieve somewhat of the ideal he dreamed of. And there was more than one of him; and later generations entered into the struggle and the aspiration of the first dreamers, that little by little, through the slow ages of progress, men have made of themselves more than the God of creation made of them,—and hence the marvel of civilization. And every true mother takes to her knee the little child that God has given her, and by the things she can teach, and the ideals she can inspire, and the sacrifices she can suffer in its behalf, she shall find it her glory to make her boy be *more man*, braver, manlier, purer, nobler man, than he could ever be without her effort,—more of a *soul* than the soul of the child God gave her, be-

cause of what she can be *creatively* to make her child what he shall become! And he shall surely become something less than that, unless she do it!

Does this sound like blasphemy? Of course it is blasphemy, if we take it in the wrong way; but see the heights of reverence to which it brings us if we take it the right way. We think of God usually as the All-wise and All-sufficient Source of being, and in a sense this is accurate. Did you ever think of God as the eternally Dependent God?—eternally dependent on his children, men, for the last completion of his divine ideal of creation in spiritual progress? Yet there is the final fact.

To speak it thus is surely blasphemy,—until we tell the secret of its significance. For this is so, must be so, simply because the Eternal has willed it thus to be. It is part of the Eternal Purpose, it is the *Will of God* that we be gathered into the glory of his eternal workmanship. We share, not fictitiously but effectually, in God's method of divine progress; it is the absolute way of being that God is not sufficient for his own creation, save as we enter into the fellowship of his doing, and *are responsible with him* for the achievement of its progress.

Of course I have presented this in its more immediate and cruder form. In a deeper sense we cannot separate the creative energy of the human soul from the informing mystery of the eternal energy of God, which is our source of being. Of course the final logic of man's dream of incarnation removes all trace of an absurdity which I have here hinted at; for when we are at our best in creative ideal and achievement we find ourselves in God,—that it is he and not we ourselves, —(nay, rather it is he—and we *most ourselves!*) who achieves the glory. But I have not purposed here to delay with this phase of life's elemental mysticism. The pragmatic value of it all is that in this new thought of God the value of religion lies not chiefly in submission, or obedience, or adoration, or worship, or even love of God, but in fellowship with God, in an eager sense of burden of responsibility with God for the way of God's progress in creation.

Note the significance of this. According to this idea the child of man can nowhere look about in the universe to which he belongs, and discovering anywhere within it that which does not square with his soul's ideal of what ought to be in place of the thing that is,—whether it be bitter flavor in the apple, or meagre beauty in the rose, or futile waste of energy in the thunder-bolt, or custom of injustice and wrong in age-enduring social institution, or instinct of brutishness in the natural soul of a child,—and seeing thus a conflict between what is and what ought to be, shall say yet to himself, "But the Creator-God hath made it thus: who am I that I dare try to change the purpose of the Eternal!" No longer that! The modern man of religion shall discover nowhere under God's heaven a phase or form of being, or custom of society or mode of institution seemingly fixed in the order of being, which yet seems not as it ought to be to his soul's ideal, without feeling challenge from God *just there* to be as God, to enter into the workmanship of God, to do for God what God waits for him to do, for the completion of the pattern of the eternal destiny. Man's chief relationship to God, under this vision, is responsibility with God for the working out of God's dream of progress in ideal perfection. *For religion in its last analysis is passion for progress: the impulse of creation: fellow-workmanship with the Eternal.*

How this gives to religion a new virility and eagerness of meaning! People sometimes think of Unitarianism as a faith bereft of eagerness. It is placid; it is critical; it is intellectually complaisant; it is Orthodoxy emasculated of virility; it is Calvinism despoiled of drama; it is surpassingly sensible, but it is not on fire with passion! Sometimes the older Unitarianism has seemed like that. Never so the New Unitarianism! It is tingling with the stress of resolute consecrations and divine responsibilities; it is masculine, it is venturesome, it is creative. Its ultimate emphasis of religion is the zest of creation, the passion of progress, the ardor of superb artisanship in God's glory of the ideal. Is it not a privilege to have part with such?

Robert Browning and His Message

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IN his poem entitled "Fra Lippo Lippi" Browning gives us these lines:

"This world's no blot for us,
Nor blank; it means intensely, and means good;
To find its meaning is my meat and drink."

I think we have here the key to a true understanding of the poet's life, work and message. Judging from all that he wrote, and also from the very full knowledge we have of his history, it does not seem too much to say that no man ever believed more firmly than he that the world and man's life are not mere blind chance and emptiness, but full of infinite significance and worth. And it is equally clear that to penetrate more and more deeply into that sigfinificance and into the reality of that worth, was the supreme aim of his endeavor all his years.

Browning is a dramatist—above all else a dramatist, but not like Shakespeare. Shakespeare wrote dramas representing the life of the many-sided world as seen by the eyes of the spectator. Browning wrote dramas representing the life of the many-sided world as lived and felt by the actors. At one time he thought his dramas might be played, and efforts were made to put one or more of them on the stage, but the efforts were failures. He is too subjective for a play-writer; nor has he sufficient simplicity. But his thought and method are essentially dramatic, none the less. He may almost be declared to have created a kind of drama of his own. It may be called the psychological drama. It has been said that all his poems are "dramas of the soul." The reason is, his supreme interest is in the development of the soul. To him man is everything, and in man the soul is everything. This is the reason why his poems are all dramas of the internal life of human beings, tracing the workings of passions, the influence of motives, the persuits or abandonment of ideals, the sway of mind over mind, all those intricate and marvellous processes of the soul by means of which character is built up or destroyed, and human destinies are wrought out.

To Browning, this internal world, filled with the great history of souls, with the mighty epics and dramas and tragedies that make up the spiritual warp and woof of every human life, is the world of all ovemastering importance, compared with which not only the world of external nature, but also the world of outward human events, such as discoveries, inventions, wealth seeking, social changes, political adjustments, wars, coronations, and the like, is trivial. And is he not right? In another way he asks, and with mighty force, the old question of Jesus, "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul?" The soul *is* greater than all material things; and woe to the age or the man that forgets it.

Thus we see that Browning's philosophy is that of distinct idealism, not that of materialism. Born into an age of science and physical discovery and great material advance, he saw many around him greatly disturbed in their thinking, little by little losing their grasp on spiritual realities, becoming skeptical concerning the soul and God, and bowing down in worship at the shrine of the material. Not so Browning. He was never blinded by the new revelations of the starry heavens or the solid earth, or the waters under the earth. He saw that what St. Paul said of man, is also true of atoms and stars, of science and law and evolutions,—they all "live and move and have their being" in the eternal God. He saw that the material is but the garment of the deeper spiritual. He saw that God has his throne more glorious than ever seer beheld in prophetic vision, in every molecule of the physical universe, and that a physical universe from which spirit and

God were withdrawn, would shrivel in an instant into black nothingness.

Still further he saw, not only that the physical universe is based upon the spiritual and draws from it its very life, but he also saw that all of those interests of man which have to do with the material,—his houses, lands, manufactures, commerce, finances, railroads, armies, navies, cities, states, empires—that all these must have their importance measured in terms of the spiritual: they are of value as they promote the life of man, as they serve the soul, whereas to the extent in which they fail to furnish freedom and nourishment to the soul they are a delusion and a cheat, giving men stones for bread.

With this clearer vision than that of so many of his fellows, this deeper insight, this larger and profounder philosophy, Browning went forth, serene and strong, to be a teacher in a troubled time.

Probably the three men who did more than any others to stay the tide of materialistic thought which arose so powerfully during the last half of the 19th century with the great new developments of science, and to help their fellows through it all to keep their faith in things spiritual and eternal, were Browning and Martineau in England and Emerson in America.

Of course in saying this I do not mean that Browning was not in sympathy with science and the modern spirit. On the contrary, he was a thoroughly modern man. His spirit was modern. He believed profoundly in science and rejoiced in all its discoveries and new revelations. He was the admirer and the personal friend of many of the leading scientists of England. But he was not carried off his feet by science.

He was wise enough to see that science cannot take the place of religion any more than it can take the place of poetry or art or music. He was also clear-visioned enough to see that science does not disturb religion, when religion is rightly understood. Science disturbs and destroys many superstitious ideas, many unreasonable and unfounded theological teachings which have been associated with religion, but not religion itself.

How modern was Browning's spirit is seen in his constant plea for the real and the practical, as distinguished from the vague and the far off. He was an idealist, but he was no less a realist. He believed in ideals, but he wanted them not merely dreamed about but lived, lived here and now. If his brow is in the sky, his feet always stand firm on the solid earth. He wants a religion not only of hopes for the future, but of realizations for the present. We find in him no shallow sneers at future heavens; but he wants also, and first of all, present heavens—this world lifted up toward heavenly conditions. He does not forget or despise what may lie on the other side of the great mystery which we call death. Forever the hope of that shines before him like a star. But he believes that the hope of the beyond should make men more faithful to the duties of this life. The way to prepare for heaven, he believes, is to live well on earth. Thus we find him writing:

"I act for, talk for, live for, this world now,
As this world calls for action, life and talk,—
No prejudices to what next world may prove,
Whose new laws and requirements my best pledge
To observe them, is, that I observe these now—
Doing hereafter what I do meantime.
Let us concede (gratuitously though)
Next life relieves the soul of body, yields
Pure spiritual enjoyments:—well, my friend,
Why lose this life in the meantime, since its use
May be to make the next life more intense?"

Browning is not a poet of ease. He is not a quietest. His ideal of life is not rest, or cessation from struggle. He believes struggle to be not an evil but a good. He is the poet of the morally strenuous life. He sees life to be a battle, a battle that is sometimes very severe. But this does not dismay him. Rather it gives him joy. Is it said that victory is to the few? Yes, he answers: what *men call* victory *is* to the few. But what God calls victory is not to the few—that is to all

who will have it. To God, noble struggle is *itself* victory.

This noble strain runs through a large part of his writings. There is hardly a poem of importance that does not contain some notes of it. And it has a wonderful power to stir the blood and to awaken hope and heroism. Let me reproduce some echoes of this splendid strain:—

In "Cleon" we read:—

"Why stay on earth except we grow?"

In "Andrea del Sarto":—

"Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a Heaven for?"

In "Saul":—

"What stops my despair?
This:—'Tis not what man does which exalts him, but what man *would* do!"

In "The Ring and the Book":—

"The moral sense grows but by exercise."

In the poem entitled, "In a Balcony":—

"I count life just a stuff
To try the soul's strength on, educe the man."

In "James Lee's Wife":—

"Rejoice that man is hurled
From change to change unceasingly,
His soul's wings never furled."

In "Bishop Blougram's Apology":—

"When the fight begins within himself
A man's worth something."

Some whole poems one would like to reproduce. Here are some deep lines from "Abt Vogler":—

"What is our failure here but a triumph's evidence
For the fullness of the days? Have we writhed or agonized?
Why else was the pause prolonged, but that singing might issue thence?
Why rushed the discords in, but that harmony should be prized?"

The entire poem, "Rabbi Ben Ezra," is equally virile. Here are a dozen lines:—

"What I aspired to be,
And was not, comforts me.

"All I could never be,
All, men ignored in me,
This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped.

"Then welcome each rebuff
That turns each smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!

"Be our joys three-parts pain!
Strive and hold cheap the strain;
Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe!"

How such lines put courage into the soul, and moral iron into the blood!

No one can study Browning long without seeing that he is preeminently a poet of strength. His writings everywhere speak of power, of virility. It is not because he is weak that he renders supreme homage to *love*. It is because he sees that love is the strongest thing in the universe. Jesus saw the same in his day. So did Buddha in his. One wonders that so few in the Christian Church, which has so long been calling Jesus Master, understand yet the power of love. Sometime the Church generally will understand it. Then there will no longer be an angry God in the heavens, or a hell of vengeance below. Sometime the nations will understand it. Then great armies and great navies will pass away, and the scourge of war will cease to blacken fair lands; and peace will come to this greed-cursed, hate-cursed, slaughter-cursed earth. All men who see with Jesus and with Browning that love *is* the highest thing in the universe, and strongest, are helping the coming of that good time. It is a question how much anybody else is or can. It sometimes seems as if men were determined to try every other conceivable plan for saving the world before trying love. When everything else fails, as everything else will fail, and men come at last really to try the plan of love marked out by Jesus, does anybody fear that that will fail?

Browning has been well called the poet of "triumphant faith." I think these are exactly the right words. Not only has he mighty faith, but his faith has in it an element of joy, of assurance, of triumph, of victory, that is equalled in hardly any other poet or writer. In this he far surpasses Tennyson. Tennyson is the poet of hope struggling up into faith—but he never gets quite past the struggle. The faith that he reaches is always a little

tremulous. It never seems quite sure of itself. It never soars and rejoices and sings. But in Browning there is no such limitation. Browning's faith never trembles. It has wings as strong as eagles. If it struggles it is the struggle of a lion with a foe that is certain to be vanquished. This is the reason why Browning is helpful to so many persons in an age of doubt and questioning and fear. His eye is clear. His tread is firm. His hand is strong to lead others less sure-footed than he.

It is the nature of faith to kindle faith. It is the nature of vision to communicate itself to others. We can often see things when they have been pointed out to us, which it was impossible for us to see before. This is the value of seers to the world. They help others to see. This is the value of prophets. They lead men up to the heights, where the air is clear, and from which larger worlds come into view.

Probably there is no other class of men who are of so much value to the race as men of faith, if only their faith is built on knowledge, on truth, on sure foundations. But if their faith is built on superstition, on credulity, on pretense, on foundations which fail when tested, then they are blind leaders of the blind, and both fall into the ditch. He who can give to men faith based on reality; faith which is knowledge carried down to deeper foundatons; faith which is truth, but truth with larger horizons and cognizant of its relations to God and the things that are eternal—the man who can give to his fellows such true faith as that, confers upon them a good which all the gold in the earth's mountains cannot measure the value of.

Browning's writings everywhere ring clear concerning man's supreme hope—that death is not all—that beyond its mystery there waits for us another and a larger life. In this he rises far above Tennyson. He has some passages whose tone is almost as triumphant as anything in Whitman. In "The Ring and the Book" we read:—

"Death is far from a bad fate."

And again:

"No work begun shall ever pause for death."

In "Abt Vogler" we have this pean of victory:—

There shall never be one lost good! what was shall live as before.
The evil is null, is naught.
All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good, shall exist:
Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty, nor good, nor power
Whose will has gone forth, but each survives the melodist,
When eternity affirms the conceptions of an hour.
The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,
The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,
Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard;
Enough that he heard it once: we shall hear it by and by."

This from "Bifurcation":—

"But deep within my heart of hearts there hid
Ever the confidence, amends for all,
That heaven repairs what wrongs earth's journey did.
All that is at all,
Lasts ever, past recall;
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure;
What entered into thee,
That was, is, and shall be.
Time's wheel runs back or stops; potter and clay endure."

I make a single other quotation, from "Paracelsus":—

"I go to prove my soul!
I see my way as birds their trackless way.
I shall arrive! what time, what circuit first,
I ask not; but, unless God send his hail,
Or blinding fireballs, sleet or stifling snow,
In some time, his good time, I shall arrive:
He guides me and the bird. In his good time!
If I stoop
Into a dark tumultuous sea of cloud,

It is but for a time; I press God's lamp
Close to my heart; its splendor, soon or late,
Will pierce the gloom; I shall emerge one day."

Such are a few of the mountain peaks of Browning's poetry which afford us clearest glimpses of his splendid and unwavering faith in God, in truth, in the soul, in duty, in love, in the immortal life, in eternal good for all men.

If the human soul is the thing of supreme value in the universe, how can permanent disaster befall it? If "God's in his heaven," as Browning makes little Pippa sing, where is there room for doubt that "All's right with the world?" May be that men, and nations, and the world itself, are passing through fires; but if God is God, then they are furnace fires, out of which gold of ultimate good is to come: they are not fires of disaster and doom. To declare final and remediless disaster to a single human soul, is to declare that God is *not* in his heaven—but that the throne of the universe is vacant.

Of course all that I have said means that Browning is an optimist. But there are two kinds of optimism. One is weak and sentimental. It is born of easy-going good nature, superficial thinking, and much shutting of eyes to the pain and suffering and sorrow that are in the world. Browning's optimism was not that. Browning faced the world's pain and suffering and sorrow, saw it all, felt it all: and was an optimist still, spite of it all,—nay because of it—for his eyes penetrated deep enough into humanity, deep enough into the great moral laws, to see that these things are humanity's growing pains. Humanity is being created, and these things are just the fires and the hammers by means of which the better humanity that is to be, is being wrought out. Pain and suffering and struggle are not enemies to man, they are friends. They are discipline by which he grows; they are ladders by which he climbs; they are the hand of God, by which slowly but surely he is lifted out of the material, into the spiritual, out of the animal into the divine. It is out of the discipline of these things that moral strength, self-mastery, obedience to moral law, character, and above all love, are born. Thus by them man becomes man, a child of God, and an heir of the eternities.

I trust I have now made clear why I cited in the beginning, as a key to the life and message of Robert Browning, those lines of robust faith and splendid optimism from his "Fra Lippo Lippi":—

"This world's no blot for us,
Nor blank; it means intensely and it means good:
To find its meaning is my meat and drink."

TO THE MOUNTAIN LAUREL.

By Anita Trueman Pickett.

Firm and true through the winter long,
Thy stout roots hold and thy stem stands strong.
Glossy and green in the barren days,
Thy slender leaves grace the woodland ways

Thine is the constant faith which keeps
Its place when the angry storm-wind sweeps,—
The gentle hope that in patience glows
When the world is weary of winter snows.

The pine-tree, priest of the forest, lifts
His arms in prayer, where the cloud-wrack drifts:
He lights his candles of fairy green
When signs of spring on the hills are seen.

But thou art the sylvan poet, thou,
Whose leaves shall wreathe the singer's brow;
Sign of the immortality
Of art and love and liberty.

Close to the earth thy branches bend,
Clinging together as friend with friend.
One with the earth's warm life is thine,
Sharing her secret of faith divine.

For when the glory of spring is flung
Abroad in the world, and her songs are sung,
No fairer blossom lifts its head
Than thy clustered stars of white and red.

Let the solemn pine his candles light!
Let the orchards break into sudden white!
The laurel shares the passion of bloom
And the peace of the evergreen's sacred gloom.

Such is the poet's cosmic life—
Sharing the passion, the urge, and the strife
Of the changing seasons, yet holding true
To the Endless Life that is always New.

Laurel Farm, West Woodstock, Ct.

The Medium of the Unitarian Faith

By Rev. Lawrence P. Jacks, D. D., *of Oxford, Eng.*
Editor of the *Hibbert Journal.*

This paper was the third of a series of addresses given at the May meeting of the New York Unitarian Club.—The Editor.

THE medium or form of expression which any religious message takes, must always be dependent to some extent upon the nature of the message itself. But it is equally true that the form or medium you use for conveying your message to other people reacts upon the nature of the message. This doctrine of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, which is said, I think rightly, to be the central part of our message, is subject to these conditions. The gospel which centers on a message of that kind seems to me to require a medium of expression which shall be both many-sided and elastic, attractive and beautiful. But if the only form for conveying that message which we enploy is the form of verbal repetition in one way or another, then that message will fall dead, and will not produce the effect upon the human heart which it ought to produce. For that reason it is impossible to treat the medium of expression, the medium of appeal, apart from the nature of the message itself; and any significances which may attach to the few remarks I have to make tonight will depend upon your taking those remarks in conjunction with what has already been said by other speakers about the content of the Unitarian message.

In what I have to say I am afraid I shall have to be guilty of speaking somewhat dogmatically. I have no time to unfold all the reasons for what I have to say and I am quite sure you would have no patience to listen, even if I had time, so you will forgive me if my tone seems dogmatic. I am going to lay down in this dogmatic way three propositions; propositions which I myself regard as tolerably certain, though I well know they are open to question and are matters of considerable debate among my Unitarian friends.

My first proposition is that every living religion requires a rich, a varied, and an elastic medium of expression. Every living gospel requires that. That follows simply from the endless diversity of human nature, and from the essential uniqueness of each individual soul whom you address. A great truth which will appeal strongly to one mind, or one class of minds, if presented in the form of a logical statement will utterly fail to appeal to another class of mind unless a totally different way of putting it is found. Thus the great religious truth of the love of God will appear convincing to many persons when it is presented as part of a rational system of truth. But other men will find such a mode of presenting the love of God almost meaningless, certainly unconvincing, while at the same time they will yield their consent to its truth with the greatest willingness when presented in another form, say in the form of the story of Gethsemane, or of the Cross, or in a piece of symbolism, like the Lord's Supper, or even at the sight of a crucifix set up by the roadside. Persons dead to logical and philosophic modes of presenting the great truth will yield immediately when it is brought before them by some impressive object lesson of that time. Now it is for this reason that a living religion which is to appeal to a multitude of souls must always be provided with a varied and many-sided expression of appeal. That is my first proposition.

The second, which I think is somewhat more debatable, is that Unitarianism as it stands today suffers from poverty in the range of forms by which it delivers its message to the world. The demand for veracity which has been one of its greatest merits and one of its most characteristic features, has reduced the religious vocabulary of Unitarianism within very

narrow limits, and what is perhaps a still more serious loss, this insistence upon strict veracity has largely deprived Unitarianism of the use of symbolism, which is of very great importance in the expression of religion. It has led also, and this I think is especially worthy of notice, to the use of a great deal of non-committal language in religion. Only the other day I heard the Deity addressed as "Infinite Nearness." Well, I feel a little reluctant in criticising devotional expressions, but I must express my conviction that that is just one of those terms which may mean anything or everything, and which therefore means nothing at all. For my part, I could not say my prayers to "The Infinite Nearness." The terms seems to be equally applicable to the atmosphere as to the Almighty.

In saying as I venture to do that Unitarians have fallen upon a somewhat narrow and limited range of expression of their religion, I do not mean to say that it has ceased to be vocal, or that Unitarians are less eloquent than ministers of other denominations; but only that Unitarianism has a limited medium of expression which even in its own limits lacks a certain freedom of imagination.

My third proposition is that whereas the message of Unitarianism ought by its nature to appeal to everybody, yet owing to the comparative poverty of its expression, it appeals only to a comparatively few. In its broadest sense its message is the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God; that is a religion for everybody, but the world at large does not respond to it to such a degree as a universal religion ought to command.

Now I will ask you to bear with me while I go a little further into an analysis of these propositions. Among Unitarians the burden of expressing the message falls almost entirely on the individual minister. The individual preacher,—(Mr. Cummings said there are no individuals, but I think there are a few in the Unitarian ministry anyhow; I rather think that Dr. Collyer is an individual and I even believe that Mr. Cummings himself is one)—the individual preacher in the Unitarian church is the organ, the vehicle, the medium of the message. Just compare this with the state of things in the great orthodox communions. There the burden of appeal, the organ to which the appeal is made, is distributed over a much wider area. There is, to begin with, the church itself, the church idea, the church whose mere existence as a great body from age to age is a speaking symbol to everybody of the permanence of religious truth. Then there is the priesthood, however much we may disapprove of it. Then there are the sacraments which mean and convey more to some people than any amount of eloquent preaching could ever do; and then there is the Bible which relieves the individual minister of the burden of speaking on his own authority; and last but not least there is the person of Christ, which is presented in the orthodox churches in such a way as to suggest many great truths, which you would acknowledge as great truths, but which nevertheless it would be extremely hard to *present* in any other manner.

Now the orthodox minister shares the burden of the message with all these other forms and vehicles of expression. I am not recommending that the Unitarian would gain anything by borrowing these forms or repeating and using them for his own message, for I believe such a thing would be impracticable for most of us, but I would point out that orthodoxy with its ideas of the church, its sacraments, its Bible, all its imagery about Christ and so on, has a range of forms for appealing to various types of mind which the Unitarian minister has not, and of which he must often desire that he had some honest counterpart.

Then again there is another point. The independent minister, dependent as he is on himself, is often confined also to a single type of medium for his message: I mean the rational statement of his belief and opinions. The tradition of veracity in which he has been brought up disinclines him to a free use of his spiritual imagination, because any use of that faculty will probably betray him into forms of expression of which he will find it difficult to give a precise logical justification. The typical Unitarian minister is, I think, a little shy of indulging his

spiritual imagination. That is an altogether honorable attitude, and yet there is no denying that it greatly limits the range of the Unitarian minister's appeal, and often gives the air of coldness and baldness to his message which is very far from his real feeling about religion. That is a little injustice which the world does us. The Unitarian minister knows as well as anybody else that religion is a flower of the heart and not of the head, and yet he is bound to confess that orthodoxy with all its symbolism is often more successful in reaching the heart than is all his logical statement.

Then I want you to look on the other side and consider the really strong point. Is not this universally admitted to be a truth, namely, that the only fully effective medium for the expressions of religious message is the personality of the man? Unless men read our message in our lives, it is certain they will never read it from our words, and if they do read it from our lives, from our personality, from the tone and atmosphere which we bring, I think they will read it in a form which gives the message its fullest effect and takes it straight home from our hearts. All is well, so long as they get it from our lives, no matter what they get from our words. To be dependent on his own personality for his medium of expression is not a disadvantage therefore for the minister, provided he rises to the occasion; but we must admit the occasion is a very difficult one for him to rise to. It seems, too, to require that he shall be something of a saint and a prophet, and what is more, that his congregation will be willing to give him a prophet's reward; by which I mean not merely that they will pay him a decent salary,—though I do mean that!—but that they shall show him a degree of sympathy and a suspension of their individual likes and dislikes, and the cordial cooperation which is not always to be found in our highly critical Unitarian congregations.

But while this insistence upon personality makes the minister's task a very difficult one in one sense, there is another sense in which it facilitates that task. Our message is one which leaves the preacher free to place the whole of his manhood at the service of God. Now I do not think that can be said for every form of Christian message but I think it can be said of ours. The minister of our message has no need of sanctimonious airs, in order to enforce his gospel, no need to put unnatural restraints upon his activities. He has no need to cultivate clerical manners or try to make himself appear any better than he is. He can freely use all his interests and all his activities as a man as part of his ministerial apparatus, all his social and personal relationships can be employed as the medium of the message which he is to deliver. All his manhood is there for that purpose, and the more he does this, the more he delivers his mesasge through these forms and in that way, just by being a man in the fullest sense of the term, without any pretense or unnatural restraints, the less he relies on professional actions and manners for the doing of his work, the more effective will his message be. It is his business to make religion easy and natural to men, and that is the way in which he can do it.

For my own part I think it is possible for us to make a much freer and fuller use of historical language, the historical language of the Christian religion, in forming the medium of our message, a much freer use than we commonly do. We have been perhaps too much occupied in reducing the historical language of Christianity to its lowest terms. But what, I think, is rather needed is to exalt this language to its highest terms. We ought to realize that the medium of expression by which a religious truth is most truly conveyed is not always the form of which the clearest logical justification could be given. A little less of the philosophy of religion and a little more of the poetry of it would do us good;— and I can express what I mean by merely mentioning to you the name of Dr. Collyer.

Santayana, in one of his books says a rather unkind thing about Unitarians and liberal Christians in general; he says the function of liberal Christianity has been merely that of minimizing the meaning of orthodoxy. Now, as applied to competent exponents of Unitarianism, I think

that is flagrantly unjust. But there is a certain truth in it as applied to incompetent exponents of which there have been some. Last Christmas Day I happened to be in a little country town, and went into the Unitarian chapel of that town, for the Christmas service. The minister took as his text the words—"Christ was born in Bethlehem." The sermon consisted of four parts. The first was a proof that the person named in the text was not Christ, had no claim to the title of Christ; the second part proved that he was not born on Christmas Day; the third part proved that he was not born in Bethlehem; the fourth part proved that in all probability there never was such a person as Jesus Christ. That was a Christmas sermon. Now that is the kind of thing that gives color to the unkind remarks of Santayana. It all comes from that nervous and mistaken quest of veracity of which I have spoken, which leads us to suppose that no medium for a religious message can be right until it has been reduced to its lowest terms. Now I think just the opposite is true. Of course nobody who had the least imagination, the least feeling for art or poetry, to say nothing of religion, could preach such a sermon as I have just alluded to, but at any rate I think we all agree that nobody who hopes to reach the hearts of men would ever adopt such a method as that, however logical it may be—and I do not think it is very logical either.

In conclusion: It is my belief that no form of words is very adequate to the expression of religious truth. No mere logical proof of religious proof is ever so conclusive but that it can be questioned and criticised by anybody who has resolutely made up his mind to question and criticise it. Absolute certainty in that sense is something we shall never get. A form of expression perfectly adequate to all we mean we shall never get either; at their very best all these statements of truth are very inadequate vehicles for religious truth. That ought to make us a little more charitable, and a little more tender toward those statements of orthodoxy which we ourselves are in the habit of criticising. It might even lead us to make some use of those forms ourselves, provided we could see them simply as imaginative symbols, and not as cut and dried doctrine. I believe that all forms, all mediums of expression, religious expression, even the simplest, are, to a certain extent symbolic in their nature; they refer to matters which cannot be fully expressed, but only indicated by words, and which we can only fully apprehend in the luminous silence of intuition.

If this is true it is very important. It would lead us to place rather less importance than we usually do on the mere form of our own message, and to a certan intellectual humility in the handling of the medium of that message, a humility which is at present often conspicuous by its absence among us. If the same negative attitude that we have to orthodox doctrine were applied to our own position with the same vigor and severity with which we have applied it to others, we might, I think, see an illustration of the the old saying that he who taketh up the sword shall also himself perish by the sword.

A SECTION OF RURAL NEW HAMPSHIRE.

By Rev. H. G. Ives,
Minister of the Church in Andover, N. H.

FEW summer visitors have ever penetrated into that part of New Hampshire which lies between Franklin and White River Junction.

Here for forty miles the Northern railroad winds its way under the shadow of Kearsarge Mountain through the Blackwater Valley which has seen few changes since Daniel Webster left Salisbury to practice law in Boston. People have come and gone, houses have been moved, (the country substitute for rebuilding), farms have been abandoned, the forest has crept back upon the hills and ambitious young people have left for the cities and the alluring West.

But life on these foot-hills of the White Mountains has drifted on in peaceful indifference to the outside world. Local interests, town politics, church life and the grange, absorb general attention.

In one town the politicians boast that no member of the other party has gone from it to the Legislature. A forest fire would not be a more serious calamity in their eyes than this event. Even the road commissioners must belong to the right side, whether they understand road making or not.

Essentially the same farming methods are carried on that were practiced fifty years ago with the exception that coal has been substituted for the vanished wood and the milk instead of being churned on the farm is placed upon the train. The telephone affords a delightful means of both hearing and over-hearing the news, and the rural free delivery brings the postman to the door. More and more the farmer buys from the village store and it would almost seem, raises less to sell in return. Even imported potatoes find a ready market where once the farmer grew his own wheat.

Nature, like a modern Circe, lulls the farmer to sleep. He can do less work and yet be sure of enough food to eat than any other member of society. In the old days the village factory provided him with a market, and lent stimulating variety to rural life. The young mechanic found occupation near home. Now the market lies at a great distance, and the mechanical boy leaves for the city. The farm is like a lonely castle, situated in a deserted region. Selling timber lots and working on the railroad has seemed more remunerative than trying to develop the farm.

Now the danger of such isolation is that peculiar local standards of morality may arise. Vote buying can cease to be regarded as an evil when the best men practice it. Even the importance of the family life is questioned when it is sufficiently disregarded. "Far from the madding crowd" human nature reverts to primitive instincts and unexpected situations result. The moralist is often shocked, the observing student of men is interested and the social worker is impelled to renewed efforts.

For the goodness inherent in man shows itself even through unwise practices. Voters are often bought through a misapplied sense of loyalty. Rural problems arise in almost every instance from loneliness, poverty and imprudent friendships. The commercialized vice of the city is almost unknown. The Civil War left many women unprotected and without a ready means of livelihood. A leading educator of our country told me that his New Hampshire town of 4,000 inhabitants sent almost 1,000 men and boys to that great conflict. Few of them came back to stay and rebuild the shattered community life.

But the individuals who became discouraged only emphasized the sturdy endurance of the majority who clung to high ideals. Out of Nazareth the Christ still comes.

A boy came to Proctor Academy, which is situated at Andover, from a village which has been called "Darkest New Hampshire." He cooked his own food and lived on fifty cents a week, helped his family and saved $344 in 91 weeks. Today he is one of the best Greek students at Dartmouth College. He has recently put a bath-room into the family home.

A girl was rescued from being a farm drudge. She told the lady who took her in that she was "more familiar with the horse-rake and hoe than with the dish cloth and broom." So it proved and she eventually had to be sent to an institution where nice personal habits are taught by painful reiteration. But while at Proctor Academy she led her class in Latin, Mathematics and History. In English no one could approach her.

There is good material growing up in these foothills. It comes of a straight Puritan stock. Physical grace and beauty are so common as to be taken for granted. Reserve power and endurance exist to a surprising degree.

The crude, shy boy and girl who start bringing their food on Mondays and return on Fridays for a fresh supply, become transformed during their four or five years at school. An agent of the State Superintendent of Education discovered some years ago that a village twenty miles from here was being cleaned up by them. These young people would not stand for the old time shiftlessness.

A stranger trying to remedy this would have been told that it was none of his

business. "A little child shall lead them." The young people of this section have it in their power to put things right. The future lies in their hands.

This section is a farming district, as fine an apple, hay and corn region as can be found. It's future depends on the resumption of real farming. Historians tell us that in 1840 it possessed as prosperous a condition of farming as the world then knew. So Proctor Academy has begun a course in modern agriculture, under an attractive teacher who combines the qualities of mathematician, trained agriculturist and all-around athlete. Twenty-one boys and girls have taken his course and an adjoining farm has been recently purchased in which demonstrations can be carried on under the eyes of all the students.

The State College of Agriculture at Durham, New Hampshire, provides frequent lectures upon the new science of modern farming and the Grange, through its tremendous social influence, is calling men back to the soil. A new gospel is now heard in this North country. It preaches the tremendous possibilities which await the New England farmer who will supply the Eastern markets with the food upon which they must subsist. The railroad links him with the great city and the city must have food to feed its millions. It will not be many years before men will be earning $5,000 a year from scientifically planted orchards in our section. Already some of our brightest boys have determined to stay in the country and raise apples or keep hens.

Equally important is it, that the girls shall be taught domestic science so that they will know how to cook the food which their brothers grow. Indeed what is needed here is a Hampton or Berea which shall emphasize practical efficiency along the line of modern needs. With such an institution there would arise in twenty-five years from now a revived and prosperous farming section, keeping its young people at home, and providing them with profitable employment, together with access to those opportunities for fine living which young people should have.

God grant that it may come. New Hampshire has done so much toward the building up of a nation. How poor the great cities and the West would have been but for her sturdy sons and daughters! Is it not time that she, herself, received attention, and is given a fair opportunity to renew her creative powers?

Our Readers' Exchange

"FOR THE HONOR OF THE CHURCH."

Editor of THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE:

In view of the fact that a small group of people prominent in the ranks of the Unitarian Church of this country has thought well to publicly repudiate, not for themselves alone, which would be their unquestioned right, but, in the name of the Unitarian body at large, and especially of Unitarian women, the action taken by the American Unitarian Association at its annual meeting in passing a resolution favorable to the principle of the enfranchisement of women, and that moreover wholly unwarrantable aspersions have been cast on the motives of the proposer of that resolution, and his supporters, will you, in fairness permit a few plain words to be said on behalf of a great number of people whose dearest hope it is to see our own free Church actively enlisted in the cause of freedom, and the defence of the oppressed, at all times, and in all places?

To such the survival of the spirit which in former times led to the persecution of the Abolitionists, and tacitly supported the abuses of slavery, that spirit which today is regarded as a sign of almost inconceivable spiritual blindness, and recognized as the cause of incalculable moral loss to the Church, cannot but be a source of bitter regret.

Pledged to the cause of freedom by every obligation which is precious to the human heart, by our denominatonal, by our racial, by our historic affiliations, we are in grave danger of showing ourselves more indifferent, more oblivious, to the underlying spiritual significances of life, than are those other religious bodies on whom we are sometimes tempted to look with condescension holding them fettered

by artificial forms, and bounded by the gravestones of a defunct theology.

Yet it seems that their ministers may, and ours may not, except at the risk of grave shock to vested sensibilities, and the risk of public censure, stand upon an open platform to speak for a cause which is still unpopular. And the reasons which some of the clergy of the Established Church of England allege for such action should prove interesting to the Unitarians of America.

"I stand here," said the Rev. Canon Green, vicar of St. Mark's Church, London, speaking from a suffrage platform last April, "I stand here because I am concerned for the honor of the Church. It has been to me a bitter and humiliating thing to find the belief all too widely prevalent that the Church has always barred the path of progress, always reviled the banners of the dawn. In the written history of your movement my name can have no place, but I trust it will be recorded in your hearts, and in the hearts of all who come after you, that in your hour of difficulty, in the hour when friendship was still worth having, some of your clergy were ready, nay, were proud and glad, to make your cause their own."

"In the hour when friendship was still worth having,"—the phrase is worth noting, for in the hour when the Way of the Cross has turned to the Cross triumphant there will be, as the Rev. Hugh Chapman said the other day at the London Pavilion, no lack of the episcopal, as of the popular, blessing.

"This movement is of God, and is well worth being despised, and going to prison for," was Mr. Chapman's expression of conviction, whilst Canon Green declares it to be "absolutely religious," and answers to those who, like some among our own people, would claim that it lies outside the sphere of ecclesiastical interests an emphatic negative, "If I am told that I must stand aside because political issues are involved I can only answer, humbly but firmly, 'I have not so learned Christ.'"

A speaker at the May meeting in Tremont Temple pleaded, somewhat audaciously it would seem, that we of America should be permitted to catch up with the Chinese in the march of progress. But others not so hopeful as Miss Hultin, would be glad if we might be allowed to take the shorter step of becoming as progressive as Europe first, and afterwards would modestly take place with those women of the far East and the near East, the women of "heathen" India, of unchurched Japan, of unhappy Russia, who are holding out the hands of sisterhood to the political prisoners of England.

It will be said, and truly said, that American women, and American men, are indifferent to that tragic struggle which is going on across the water today, the latest death-grapple in the world-long fight of the human being against the citadel of special privilege and injustice, because they do not understand the conditions, because a dishonest and biased press deliberately ridicules or conceals all that is great and noble and inspiring in the woman's movement, and the women's utterances, whilst it distorts, invents to their discredit, and magnifies the ignoble and petty side; never are we allowed to see the banners of the army, but only the dust in the rear of the march.

Our newspapers and the cable despatches tell us of violent deeds committed by the women, many times inventing or falsifying statements, but they say not a word of Mrs. Pankhurst's great speech before her judges, a speech which made many who heard it feel that they were sharing in one of the great acts of history, which through an hour and three-quarters kept the audience spellbound, so that, "no-one spoke, at intense passages no-one even stirred, and at the end all drew breath as at the end of a great act regretting it was over, regretting the sharp return to the lower levels of ordinary life, but rejoicing to be alive on the same earth with a spirit so fine, so flame-like, and so persistent in courage and righteousness." It seems that we have no American journalist able to recognize greatness as this Englishman recognized, and was thrilled by it, as we have none to tell us of the abiding spirit of the movement, of the heroism of the crowds of plain women who go to goal in the very spirit of the martyrs of all ages,

of the stern sense of duty and of a high call to sacrifice blotting out personality, which inspires the rank and file of the suffragists, of the financial sacrifices of the poor working-women which help to keep the cause alive, and of the cruelties practised in the prisons, cruelties which have called for indignant protest in the name of English manhood from such highly respectable bodies as the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and the Church of England League for Woman Suffrage.

Prominent space is given to recital of the deeds of excited partisans who in a moment of frantic revolt against intolerable oppression have attacked Cabinet Ministers, but none to tell of the treachery and tyranny which provoked those misdeeds, nor of the conditions of English life which have forced women into revolt.

No, we are not told, but there is an ignorance which is unpardonable because it is the evidence of want of heart, and want of vital conscience. What are Unitarians good for if they have not gained an instinct for the alleviation of human wrong, if they can bear to remain deaf to the bitter cry which goes up from the multitudes of those whom their blood sisters would help but cannot, for lack of the established means of helping, from the women paupers, the women wage-serfs, the farmed-out babies, the White Slaves? Where is the sense of responsibility of the educated American woman, the woman of privilege, who must know that she owes it solely to an enlightened public opinion, and to the chivalry of American manhood, that she is not living under legal and social disabilities as cruel and crippling as those of her English sisters?

"For the Honor of the Church," Mr. Griffin's resolution was submitted to the annual meeting of the A. U. A. And to the Honor of the Church it was carried with an outburst of overwhelming enthusiasm.

Meanwhile it would be well if every woman who stands apart, indifferent or hostile to this last great phase of the long struggle for human rights of her own sex, would examine into some of the reasons underlying the action of women who are ready to sacrifice all those things which she justly holds dear to battle for an apparently immaterial privilege. As thus:

WHY does every woman social worker, every woman almost without exception who goes and lives among the life of the poor, not merely writing about it from a luxurious library, but becoming a part of the world's suffering emerge from that experience, however she entered it, a convinced suffragist?

WHY are the opponents of Woman Suffrage almost entirely the women of wealth, privilege and leisure, women who all their lives have been protected by the care of some man, father, brother, husband, from harsh contact with the world as it exists, whilst the great majority of self-supporting women ask for enfranchisement?

WHY are so large a majority of the most intellectually gifted men and women for women's enfranchisement, and so few opposed to it, both on this side of the Atlantic and in England? There must be some vital reason underlying a movement which has been enthusiastically endorsed by women such as Julia Ward Howe, Clara Barton, Jane Addams, in this country, and by Beatrice Harraden, William De Morgan, Israel Zangwill, Lawrence Housman, Dr. Garrett Anderson, Baroness von Suttner, in Europe?

WHY should so many women of this calibre be willing to forego their birthright of privilege and honor, and accept instead the bitterest degradations and humiliations which the law of the land can inflict upon them deliberately and of choice? No sane being enjoys prison walls, the torture of punishment cells, the ignominy of being classed with criminals, the horrors of forcible feeding. These women are not fools, and they are not felons. There must be a compellant reason for their action. Might it not well be a torture to every sensitive spirit as the London *Daily News* avers it is, to think of these devoted persons "Imprisoned in felon's cells, in a world so plentifully lacking in nobility of spirit, and so bitterly in need of it?"

And, finally, if it be indeed true, as the "Protest" of sixteen Unitarian women

lately published in the *Register* against the principle of women suffrage states that it is true, that women already bear the burdens of "famliy, religious, philanthropic, educational, and community activities," should they not in reason be allowed the use of that instrument which was always regarded as indispensable for the proper discharge of these responsibilities in the days when men still had a recognized share in their accomplishment?

Will not Unitarian men and women, but especially women, inform themselves of all sides of a great question before ranking in opposition, "For the Honor of the Church?"

K. W.

THE MIDDLE STATES LETTER.

MOST of our Unitarian churches are idle and silent during the summer months hence little news is to be gleaned from them. Just as the one-day-a-week church is gradually giving way to the seven-day-a-week church so we shall probably take a second thought about the ten-months-a-year church ere long. The ten-months-a-year school is passing and idle capital and privilege in the presence of need are their own condemnation. Not that our intellectually overfed congregations need more preaching than they get or that the winter work can be profitably carried into the summer. But that there are ways of using the church property in summer we are just learning.

This letter beginning with a resume of the virile work of last year in the Syracuse church goes on to record some of the summer work carried on by our churches. In addition to these the Orange church has been open for neighborhood recreation work which we hope to report later and the Nicetown branch of the Germantown church has doubtless carried on its important work among the less privileged. There is work to be done if we want to do it. Vacations which mean so much to tired workers need not be abandoned or even curtailed. Many workers stand ready to take up the new lines of summer work which are being developed and the investment of a few hundred dollars and a little grey matter in this phase of church work is going to widen the influence and scope of our churches.

SYRACUSE. The interior of the church, Sunday School and parlors was completely renovated during last summer, and a splendid new organ installed. The church honored the 82nd birthday of its beloved pastor emeritus, Dr. Samuel R. Calthrop, on Oct. 9th, with a banquet. A purse was presented to the doctor, and a marble bust of him placed in the church by a group of the ladies. A Christmas party and tree was given to the children of two of the neighboring public schools. Two free organ recitals have been given to crowded houses. The meetings of the Alliance, devoted to social ideals, have been of great value and interest. The Men's Club, meeting once a month, devoted itself to the consideration of Syrcuse Welfare. Such subjects as The Syracuse Social Survey, Government by Commission, Social Disease and the Family, The City and Its Boys, and a Symposium, What Can We Do for Syracuse? being treated. The season has been a successful one. A Social Service Committee was appointed at the annual meeting of the church, and will present a program of active service in the fall. In the meantime a Philanthropic Census of the church has been taken. By this we have ascertained in what special form of social service the members of the church are individually interested. This as a basis for efficient work. The church has become a member of the Central Council of Civic Betterment Agencies in the city, recently organized. Through its Social Service Committee the church has thoroughly equipped the gymnasium of the Syracuse Boys' Club, to be known as the Samuel R. Calthrop Gymnasium, in honor of the founder of the club. We have tried the experiment of advertising our services in the local papers with, I am frank to say, but fair result. The annual "Department Store," given by the ladies of the church in March, was a splendid financial success. The proceeds are devoted to the work of the Woman's Alliance, Sunday School, and young people's society.

UNION SUMMER SERVICES IN NEW YORK CITY. The summer services in All Souls Church this season have been unusually successful. As heretofore they are in charge of Rev. Leon A. Harvey, but Rev. Thomas R. Slicer, the pastor of the church, preached on the first Sunday in July in exchange with Mr. Harvey who supplied All Souls' pulpit on the last Sunday in June. Despite the heat a good audience greeted Dr. Slicer. On the following Sunday, July 14, the celebrated Abdul-Baha of Persia spoke to over six hundred people. His subject, The Unity of Humanity, is a familiar and congenial topic for Unitarians and his address, given through his remarkable interpreter, was thoroughly enjoyed.

On Sunday, Aug. 4, Mr. Harvey's subject was "Thou Shalt not Steal!" He dealt with the conditions in the Police Department of New York City as suggested by the Rosenthal case. The sermon was widely reported in the New York papers.

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BROOKLYN. The Church of the Saviour has been conducting an extensive summer work at the Willow Place Chapel during June and July, and this year, for the first time, part of the program is being continued through August.

Since the close of the regular sessions of Sunday School informal song services have been held on Sunday mornings. The attendance has been good varying in age from two years to sixty.

The Free Library and Penny Provident Bank have been open all summer; also the gymnasium and shower baths, which have been in constant use. The children are often standing in line with their towels, an hour before the door opens. The Boy Scouts have been active; and many groups of boys and girls have been taken on excursions. Through June and July the program also included a game circle and a story hour for small boys and girls, an evening of table games for all ages. Dances for the Senior House members, and meetings for the Supper Club for senior girls.

The weekly entertainments were an important and highly appreciated part of the program. These consisted of either a travel talk or some classic story illustrated with the stereopticon, and followed by a fifteen-minute play, a few recitations or musical numbers and the singing of popular songs by the audience. The attendance has ranged between three and four hundred. The Dramatic Club of girls from eight to fifteen years of age gave a different play each week producing seven during June and July.

This program of activities seems to have made ample provision for the recreation time not spent in the playground or the nearby Summer School, which the children were urged to attend.

Another important branch of the work has been the country fortnight work, conducted in cooperation with the Brooklyn Children's Aid Society and the Tribune Fresh Air Fund, through whose kindness 194 children in the neighborhood of the chapel have received the benefits of two weeks each in the country.

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MONTCLAIR: The Montclair church made the experiment last summer of throwing open its yard five afternoons a week for a free public playground for children under ten. It put in apparatus and hired a supervisor. The experiment was so unqualifiedly a success that this summer it employs three supervisors and takes in children of all ages. The supervisor for the boys over ten has the church playground in the morning with them. In the afternoon the girls and all children under ten have the playground with two supervisors while the older boys with their supervisor go to the High School ball field which by special arrangement with the Board of Education has been turned over to the church for this summer use. Baseball teams of seniors, juniors and midgets play the teams of the other two Montclair playgrounds and an athletic meet of the three playgrounds will complete the season. The boys take occasional excursions with the supervisor for swimming. Basketry, sewing, raffia work and the occupational work of various kinds proves the most popular feature of the playground with the girls and younger boys. Moving picture entertainments are also given to provide funds for

the playground and needed recreation for the public at large. The church faces the problem of interesting if possible the school authorities in the maintenance of its playground hereafter as it plans to enlarge its building next summer and must use the playground space. But the two years have demonstrated the need and this summer three hundred children have been given many happy hours.

This letter would fail to record a fact of great importance in our life did it not name the going this month of Mr. Badger and his family to his new work in San Antonio. He has touched our Unitarian activities at many points and borne the brunt of many hard and plodding tasks constructively and with quiet strength. It will seem strange without him, but fortunately some of the associations will continue. He bears all good wishes with him. The task of finding his successor is not an easy one and will engross the directors of the conference in the early fall. Fortunately strong men are being named and are seemingly available so the outlook is good.

EDGAR SWAN WIERS.

NEW BOOKS.

JINKS' INSIDE: by Harriet Malone Hobson: Phila. George W. Jacobs & Co. 348 pp.

Jinks is a street arab of tender years who has a very wretched beginning in life, and a very heroic development. His "inside" has ethical rather than physiological significance, let us hasten to add: this being the story of the evolution of a conscience. It is a story well-told: full of humor, very human, touching at times the fine depths of pathos, but altogether wholesome and sweet and interesting. There is little of conventional "religiousness" about it, the point of view being ethical rather than "Christian" in any restricted sense of the word, and if at one point the melodrama is a little forced, on the whole the development is natural and artistic. It is a book for "grown-ups" and children alike: the best of it to be appreciated doubtless by those who have had experience in social settlement service.

HENRY HILL GOODELL: The story of his life, with letters and addresses. By Calvin Stebbins. Cambridge: The Riverside Press. 340 pp.

This is a good story of a most worthy and useful life. It is an interesting story, too; both because Mr. Stebbins knows how to tell the story well, and what is more to the point because President Goodell was himself a most interesting man. His position as president of the Massachusetts Agricultural College at Amherst, where he had much to do with shaping its traditions and destinies came as the termination of a career which began resolutely in the stirring days of warfare; and the best pages of this book undoubtedly are those dealing with Prof. Goodell's war career. Mr. Stebbins writes with the affectionate delight of a close and life-time friend: writes very humanly and with warm appreciation though well-poised discrimination. About half of the volume is given over to addresses devoted chiefly to Pres. Goodell's educational interests in connection with his position as president of the Agricultural College.

THE HARVARD THEOLOGICAL REVIEW for July contains several notable articles, chief among them doubtless being one by Prof. Rudolf Euchen on "What is Driving Men Today Back to Religion?" Besides this are articles by Prof. George Trumbaill Ladd of Yale, "Is Faith in God Decadent?" by Daniel Evans of the Andover Theological School, "The Divine Revelation and the Christian Religion"; by Prof. Benj. W. Bacon of Yale, on "The Lukan Tradition of the Lord's Supper"; Rev. James DeNormandie writes of "John Eliot, the Apostle to the Indians"; John Edwards Le Bosquet, of "The Evil One: a Development"; and Willard Learody Sperry of the Echatology of the Synoptic Gospels: its Fidelity to Religious Experience."

The Hibbert Journal for July contains: "The Degeneration of Classes and People" by Dr. Max Nordau; "The Significance of Jesus for his own Age," by C. G. Montefiore; Christ as "The Truth," by R. Kennard Davis; "The Church, the

World and the Kingdom,' by the Bishop of Tasmania; "The Ungodly Organization of Society by the Rev. A. W. F. Blount; "Conformity and Veracity: 1662 and 1912" by Rev. E. W. Lummis; "The Vain Appeal of Dogma to Science" by M. M. Pattison Muir; "Logic, Bergson and Mr. H. G. Wells", by Philip E. B. Jourdain; "The Artistic Attitude in Conduct;" by E. F. Larriett "The Interpretation of Prophecy", by Rev. G. E. French; "The Gods of Epicurus: a Plea for the Serious Consideration," by B. A. G. Fuller; "The Hardships of Seamen's Wives" by Emma Mahler.

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A new series which from all appearances will take its place as one of the most important of "popular priced editions" is "The Macmillan Standard Library," the first volumes of which were published in the Spring. It is proposed to include in this "library" only those books which have been put to the test of public opinion and have not been found wanting, books, in other words, which have come to be regarded as standards. All the fields of knowledge will be represented—literature, religion, biography, history, politics, art, economics, sports, sociology and *belles lettres*—so that the person who purchases the volumes as they appear will be gathering together the most complete and authoritative works on the several subjects.

Among the books so far published in "The Macmillan Standard Library" are Archibald Cary Coolidge's "The United States as a World Power"; L. A. Sherman's "What is Shakespeare?"; Robert Hunter's "Socialists at Work"; Henry Churchill King's "Rational Living," and R. J. Campbell's "New Theology."

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MINISTERS' INSTITUTE,

East Gloucester, Mass., September 23-26,

1912.

PROGRAMME.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23.

8.00 p. m. Opening meeting at the Unitarian Church in Gloucester. Introductory address by Pres. Wright, followed by (1) Rev. Chas. E. St. John of Philadelphia, on "The God of our Fathers." (2) Prof. F. C. Doan, Ph. D., of Meadville. "The God of our Sons."

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24.

9.00 a. m. Devotional service led by Rev. C. R. Joy. 10.00. Rev. George R. Dodson, Ph. D. "The Relation of Plato to our Age and to the Ages." 11.30. Rev. William Sullivan. "The Heart of the Catholic Tradition."

3.30 p. m. (1) Rev. John H. Holmes. "Wendell Phillips." (2) Rev. E. F. Hayward. "Ministerial Courtesy."

8.00. Rev. R. W. Boynton. "Rudolf Eucken and Christian Humanism."

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25.

9.00 a. m. Devotional service led by Rev. B. R. Bulkeley of Beverly. 10.00. Rev. Frederic Gill. "A Gospel of the Spirit." 11.30. Rev. Merle St. Croix Wright, D.D. "Renouvier: A Neglected Factor in Nineteenth Century Philosophy."

3.30 p. m. (1) Rev. H. G. Spaulding. "Browning's Interpretation of Life." (2) Rev. Arthur M. Knapp. "The Other Side of the Missionary Problem."

8.00. Rev. Geo. R. Dodson. "The Philosophy of Bergson."

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26.

9.00 a. m. Rev. Robert Collyer, D. D., will lead the devotional service. 10.00 Rev. Charles E. Park. "The Modern Demand for Unitarian Principles." 11.30. Rev. Palfrey Perkins. Subject to be announced.

3.30 p. m. (1) Rev. A. M. Lord, D. D. "The New Individualism." (2) Miss Elizabeth Padgham. "Our Unitarian Women."

8.00. Rev. William Sullivan. "Constructive Mysticism in the Catholic Church."

All meetings, except that on Monday evening, will be held at the Casino near the hotel. Rooms may be obtained at $2.50 a day (with bath, $3.00), by applying to the Hawthorne Inn, East Gloucester, and all are advised to apply early. East Gloucester is on the Portland Division of the Boston & Maine, about thirty miles from Boston, and may be reached by the Gloucester Branch.

OUR NATIONAL SOCIETIES

With headquarters in the building of the *American Unitarian Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.*

Local offices at 104 East 20th Street, New York City; 105 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.; and Cor. Franklin and Geary Streets, San Francisco, Cal.

The American Unitarian Association

Founded in 1825.

The chief missionary organization of the Unitarian churches of America. It supports missionaries, establishes and maintains churches, holds conventions, aids in building meeting-houses, publishes books, tracts, and devotional works.

Address correspondence to the *Secretary*, Rev. Lewis G. Wilson.

Unitarian Sunday-School Society

Founded in 1827. Incorporated in 1885.

President, Rev. William I. Lawrance.

Treasurer, Mr. Sanford Bates.

National Alliance of Unitarian Women

Organized in 1890.

Promotes the local organization of the women of the Unitarian churches for missionary and denominational work.

Address correspondence to The National Alliance, 25 Beacon St., Boston.

Address contributions to the *Treasurer*, Mrs. Lucia Clapp Noyes, 11 St. John St., Jamaica Plain, Mass.

Young People's Religious Union

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Address contributions to the *Treasurer*, Mr. O. Arthur McMurdie.

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For What Do Unitarian Churches Stand?

FOR the religion of the spirit, as distinguished from the religion of authority, whether of pope or book, of priest or synod. They accept "truth for authority, not authority for truth," and believe in the never ceasing revelation of God to man in all lands and ages.

For freedom of thought and word, believing that freedom and truth go ever hand in hand. Therefore they do not attempt to prescribe the belief of either their ministers or their laymen, nor do they fear diversity of opinion as incompatible with unity of spirit.

For the fuller realization of the divine in the universe and in the heart of man. They believe that God is Infinite Spirit, the source of all life and truth, and that something of the nature of God may be apprehended by study of humanity, and of the world about us.

For belief in the divine humanity of Jesus, because they hold that all souls are children of the Infinite Spirit, and that the divine sonship is a universal manifestation, not a unique phenomenon.

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